MOVING PICTURE STORIES

A LUCKY PUBLICATION

In this issue:

A ROMANCE OF THE UNDERWORLD

THE SIDESHOW THE HOMETOWNERS RESTLESS YOUTH

THE LIFE STORY OF FANNIE BRICE

February 5, 1929
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MOLLY O'DAY

MOVING PICTURE STORIES

A LUCKY PUBLICATION

ETHEL ROSEMON, *Editor*

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COME, FOLKS, MAKE LETTER WHOOPEE.

Girls and boys from all over the country are finding pen pals through the Helping Hearts Club conducted by Rosemary Lee in HEARTS. This snappy little magazine is for sale at all news stands every other Tuesday and the price is only TEN CENTS. If you are lonely, let Rosemary find a pal for you. The boys and girls who belong to the club are worth while. You'll like them —and they'll like YOU. If your dealer is sold out, send TEN CENTS to Lucky Publishing Corporation, 112 West 44th Street, New York City, and the magazine will be forwarded to you. Whoopee!

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"I'm quitting tonight!" she flamed at him. "I'm through with this place forever, and through especially with YOU!"

Should Judith Andrews have told her husband the truth, the whole bitter truth about Champagne Joe and Derby Dan? That is the problem she faced when her

Romance of the Underworld

became a romance of true love in New York society

By HELEN HOYT.

A SLENDER girl in black sat at one of the desks in the reception room of a great florist's shop. She was writing the message that was to go with the flowers she had ordered and the man who had entered just after her observed that her fingers were trembling and that her eyes were shadowy with tears. From his position behind her shoulder he could see what she had written. It was not uncalled-for curiosity on Lieutenant Edwin Burke's part that made him read the girl's card; it was second nature to him to watch, observe and size up any and all fellow-beings with whom he came in contact. It was part of his job—the mainstay of his reputation as the keenest detective officer in the city. Otherwise, he did not look like a detective. He was not bull-necked and flat-footed and belligerent; he was a long, lanky, easy-moving individual with sleepy lids that drooped kindly over those eyes that had been trained to see everything. And he was very human.

It was that humanity of his that made his face very gentle as he saw that the girl had written: "In memory of my dear Mother,' and then signed the order slip, "Judith Andrews." She sat still

This is an adaptation of the Fox screen presentation of the original play by Paul Armstrong. The scenario was written by Douglas Lety and Henry Lanfield. Irving Cummings directed, with Mary Astor appearing as Judith Andrews, Ben Bard as Derby Dan, Robert Elliott as Edwin Burke, John Boles as Stephen Ransome, Oscar Apfel as Champagne Joe and Helen Lynch as Blondy Nell.

"What does any girl do—in a joint like this?" she said, and he saw the desperate glint of tears in her eyes.

for a long moment after she had finished writing the few words and Lieutenant Burke saw that she was fighting against the tears that brimmed up in the starry dark eyes. He lounged over and sat at the desk opposite her, speaking as naturally as though he had known her all her life.

"These things come to everybody, sister. We've just got to face them and see them through—and be brave. Keep your chin up—see?"

From anyone else it would have been an unheard-of intrusion, but the unutterable kindness of his eyes and his voice went straight to her burdened heart.

"It's just that—she was all—I had."

"I'm sorry. It's a hard thing to buck. But—keep your chin up, sister."

"Thank you— ever so much. I'll— I'll try."

The little smile that broke through the shadows on her face was the most piteously brave thing Detective Burke had seen for a long time. He sighed and turned to the florist's clerk.

"Tough break for that poor kid. I'm glad mine's for something more cheerful. Gimme a dozen roses. They're for my old woman. We've been married— lemme see— nine years tomorrow— and she's sure a great little woman."

FROM the heart-breaking peace of the quiet cemetery and the memory of a dear face never to be seen again, to the rackety music and clinking glasses of the Evening Star Club was a transition that Judy Andrews thought would drive her mad. But this was her job— this was the job that had given her enough money to buy medicines and comforts for the last few months. Now— now there was no further need for medicines—never any more. She shrugged her shoulders and lit a cigarette, acting a bravado she did not feel. There was Derby Dan with his dark eyes burning as he looked at her, and there was Blondy Nell, sneaking a moment from the side of her man, Champagne Joe, to twist her fingers in those of Dan, pulling his attention away from Judy to herself. She'd better look out, thought Judy. If Joe ever caught on to Nell's affair with Dan— She should worry. Suddenly she hated all of them with a deep, terrible hate—Joe, who owned the Evening Star, Dery Dan, henchman, and Blondy Nell who was steadily deceiving Joe. She hated the noisy crowd, the cheap girls who acted as "hostesses" to the motley patrons, the men-about-town who fancied themselves as "sports" because they had the entry to "Champagne Joe's". There was an elderly man across the room—old enough to know better, with his white hair tossed above a flushed face and his greedy hands pawing Nell's arm. Well, she—Judy Andrews—need be "hostess" here no longer. She was through. She slipped away to the dressing-room. Dan followed her and she turned on him like a fury.

"I'm leaving!" she said. "I'm through with it all here—particularly with *you*!"

He stood for a moment scowling at the door that had slammed between them, then he turned on his heel and sauntered back to the dance floor. A lift of his eyebrow brought Nell to his side.

"So you've decided to adopt a red hot Mamma instead of the Iceberg," she gibed, reading his thought. He nodded.

"Well fix Joe tonight," he said. "It isn't safe to play with you while he's around. Come and dance."

The white-haired old roué was dancing—or stumbling—round the floor. His wallet and his watch were easy prey to Dan's supple fingers as he brushed past to the wild strains of jungle jazz.

It was easy, too, to slip the loot into Joe's pocket as he leaned against his bar. Now all there was to do was to wait for Burke.

BURKE was staging a raid that night. Dan, close to Joe's ear, tipped off the owner of the night club that the cops were coming. He seemed to know a great deal about the movements of the cops. Still—it was useful knowledge. When Burke entered the place, there was not a bottle in view, but there was a suddenly sober elderly gentleman who shreiked that he had been robbed and appealed for justice. This was more serious. Burke drew Derby Dan aside.

"Steer me right, Dan. Where did the old gent's stuff go to?"

Dan's eyes flickered.

"Why don't you frisk Joe?" he suggested.

Lieutenant Burke looked at him with disgust.

"You wouldn't lie to me would you—*stool-pigeon?*" he asked.

"Say, I always keep in with the cops, don't I? They're good friends of mine, aren't they?" whined the other.

He leaned toward her adoringly. "You may think it over for the rest of your life, but you're marrying me tomorrow!"

He slipped a shining bracelet on her wrist and took her in his arms. "These have been the happiest two years of my life!" he said.

Burke shoved him aside with distaste. Still a tip was a tip. He approached Joe.

The result of that investigation was that Champagne Joe "went up" for a year and Derby Dan occupied his old apartment in the Fifties with a certain blonde lady as his companion. Burke kept himself well informed and he did a fair amount of thinking on the subject. He was sorry for Champagne Joe, for, though Joe was a law-breaker, he had never been a thief before this, and it looked queer.

BUT Burke had another memory of that night of the raid on the Evening Star, a memory that made his keen eyes gentle. It had been after the wagon had taken Joe and the rest of the gang to the station and Burke, left alone in the deserted club, was having a last look round. A girl had suddenly appeared from the dressing-room and shrunk back as she saw that there was some one in the place. The detective started as he recognized her and took a long step toward her.

"*You!*" he said incredulously. "What are you

doing in a joint like this? And where do you think you're going?"

Her dark eyes were suddenly weary.

"What does any girl do in a joint like this? And I suppose I'm going along to the station in your van with the others."

Burke looked at her and then turned away, speaking over his shoulder:

"The wagon's gone, so there isn't any way to get you to the station, is there? Beat it, sister—I'm not looking."

One swift, grateful dazzle of great dark eyes on him and she was gone. He gave her, as he thought, time to get out of sight before he padlocked the place and, in his leisurely way, turned toward the street entrance. Then he saw that she had not gone. She was sitting in a disconsolate little heap at the foot of the steps, every line of her slender figure showing despair, and he caught the glint of tears on her cheek. Maybe she had nowhere to go—more likely she didn't care where she went—it looked like that. Burke paused beside her.

"What's the use—of anything?" she whispered.

He thrust a big handkerchief into her hand.

"Here, use this. And *keep your chin up.*"

She saw his long, easy-moving figure lounge away, pass under the street-lamp on the corner and disappear. Her chin went up bravely and she dabbed at her eyes with the big handkerchief. Then she realized that something was tucked inside its voluminous folds—a ten-dollar bill. She gasped and all her heart warmed with passionate gratitude toward this man who had given her courage and understanding and help when she needed it most.

The next day she got a job in a laundry. It was hard work but there was something in the immaculate cleanliness of the place that calmed and strengthened her. She felt as though the fresh warmth of the soap-scented air washed her heart clean and the very action of passing the iron over crisp, starched linen seemed to smooth the wrinkles from her troubled soul. It was while she was there that a small package was handed in to Lieutenant Burke at the station house. It was from a big city laundry and contained a large handkerchief, freshly starched and ironed, and, tucked in an inner fold, was a crisp, new ten-dollar bill. Burke smiled as he put handkerchief and bill in his pocket. There was one good turn that had been worth while.

JUDITH'S job at the laundry was cut short one day when, looking up from her ironing, she saw Derby Dan approaching with a bundle of washing. He did not see her, but his sudden appearance sent terror to her soul. The hand holding the iron rested, nerveless, upon the snowy sheet she was pressing and it was not until the smell of scorched linen roused her that she realized what she was doing. The foreman examined the burned article and fired her on the spot.

Nevertheless, the period of mental rest and regular work had given her courage and ambition to go on. She got a job as waitress in a business men's lunch room and took a course at night school at the same time.

It was while she was waiting on table that she spilled a glass of water over Stephen Ransome's immaculate coat-sleeve—and fell in love with him at the same moment!

He was so nice about it—with the courteous insistence that it was an accident, "Please don't apologize—there's no harm done!" And his smile, youthful, flashing, utterly adorable, went straight to her heart.

It happened that Stephen Ransome was sailing for a vacation in Europe that day, and the memory of the deep, sweet eyes of the slim waitress were among his last memories of America as he sailed away.

JUDY graduated from night school and perhaps it was not quite by chance that she seized upon a secretarial position in the firm of Ransome and Brown. She had overheard the name of the handsome young business man in the restaurant and had never forgotten his smile. Stephen Ransome was the surprised one when he rang for a stenographer on the first day of his return from abroad and found himself looking up into lovely dark eyes that were strangely familiar. For a moment he could not place her and then he became aware that his involuntary movement of surprise had knocked over the slender vase that held a single rose. The little stream of water wet the sleeve of the stenographer's trim suit and he began to apologize. Her laughing eyes met his.

"Please don't apologize," she said. "There's no harm done!"

And then he remembered and his delightful smile flashed out.

Days followed each other happily. Ransome was drawn toward the girl, not only by her delicate beauty but by admiration for the courage

They watched, pridefully, the antics of Steve, Junior, playing with him and talking the happy foolishness that babies love.

with which she had tackled life and steadily progressed from the waitress job to her present secretarial efficiency. And, after admiration and appreciation, came something else, love!

He told her that he loved her one evening when he had taken her to dinner. Her sweet, startled eyes held love and terror together and her soft mouth quivered.

"I love you, too, Stephen, but you hardly know me. I—I'll have to think it over."

"You can think it over for the rest of your life, beloved, but you are going to marry me tomorrow. You love me—nothing else matters!"

He swept her along in a whirl of lovable, boyish enthusiasm and she adored him so! That old life of hers—Champagne Joe, the Evening Star, Derby Dan and Blondy Nell—they were all so far away from her existence now. Why should she bring sorrow and doubt into Stephen's worshipping eyes by telling him of the faraway, ugly things?

"And Judge Dacre shall marry us!" through a haze of troubled thought she heard him saying. "He's the dearest old friend. I said I'd bring you down to the court tomorrow and he'll tie the knot as soon as he gets through his morning's work. Oh darling—darling—darling!"

IT was the next morning.

"The Judge is not quite through, sir. H says will you come into the court-room and si down for a few minutes."

They followed the uniformed attendant and passed across the back of the big room where sparsely gathered groups were listening to the last of the morning's trials.

Through the mist of happiness that wreathed her whole world Judy heard a voice cut, clear and sharp:

"Dan Manning, known as 'Derby Dan' convicted this day of larceny, come forward."

There he was, dapper, sleek, evil—swaggering and cringing at the same moment—the shadow of those old, horrible days thrown across Judith's golden world!

She heard his sentence—two years in jail—and then shuddered as she realized that he would have to pass close to her on his way out to the prison

van. She tried to hide her face but she knew that his step had paused beside her. Would he dare to speak?

Stephen Ransome had risen to his feet and was going up to greet Judge Dacre. Derby Dan's sneering voice came softly, vindictively:

"An old friend is going to be married—I see."

Judy forced her eyes to meet his and then knew unutterable relief. Detective Edwin Burke was standing there, too. His hand was on Dan's arm and he was firmly urging him toward the door.

"Your trap is going to stay *shut*, Dan," he said, handing the prisoner over to a burly policeman who stood outside the door. Then he turned back to Judy whose big eyes were very dark in her pale face.

"I sure do wish you luck, Miss. Don't be afraid of that bird—he's caged. Good luck—and keep your chin up!"

"Thank you—oh, thank you," she breathed. "You always seem to come at the times when I most need—a friend."

"That sure is nice of you, Miss. I hope you'll always feel that way."

Then Stephen came back, and Judge Dacre with him, and Judy Andrews became Mrs. Stephen Ransome and began the happiest two years of her life.

TWO years, winged with happiness, fly fast; two years, shadowed by prison bars, drag bitterly slow, but, fast or slow, the years do pass and the morning of Stephen's and Judith's second wedding anniversary was the same morning that Derby Dan, unchastened as ever, got out of prison and went to Blondy Nell's old apartment to see if she was still true to him.

True or not, she was there and she seemed glad to see him. At last, he drew himself from the violence of her embrace.

"Well, we've wasted a perfectly good couple of years, Cutie," he said, "but we've got some time coming to us yet, haven't we?"

"Pretty near a year before Joe gets out—if that's what you mean. Say, if he knew about you and me and about how he got put in the jug, he'd fill you full of lead, kid."

The thought was disturbing. Dan pushed his blonde charmer viciously away from him.

"How should he know?" he snarled.

"I didn't mean nothin', Honey. I only said *if*. An,' besides, I've been sendin' him cigarettes an' papers, sometimes from you and sometimes from me. Here's a letter from him. Lookit what he wrote:

" 'My two pals: You've certainly been great to me, sending me those cigarettes and things all the time I've been in the Big House. I won't forget it easy, you can bet'.

"See, Dan, he doesn't suspect a thing."

"You're a wise baby, all right. Well, we've got to get some money. Maybe we can beat it before he gets out—huh? I got an idea of a way to get a bunch of jack. See you later and tell you more about it. I'm goin' to see an old friend."

IT had been a radiant morning for Judith Ransome. Stephen had drawn her toward him and slipped a diamond bracelet over one slim wrist, "Just to remember the day, my Beautiful!" and then they had gone together to see Steve, Junior, in his nursery, had played with him and pridefully watched his one-year-old antics. The young husband had at last torn himself away to go to the office, promising to be home early for the anniversary dinner in the evening. Judith told little Steve's nurse to take him out in the park and went herself to put him into his snowy white coat and bonnet. While she was so occupied, the door-bell rang and the nurse came through to tell Mrs. Ransome that the man had come to fix the radio. Judith looked puzzled.

"I suppose Mr. Ransome must have sent for him," she said, and, with the baby in her arms, went through to the living-room. The man who turned to face her was Derby Dan!

All the blood in her body seemed to chill. She turned and fled away from that bold, searching glance. The nurse looked at her with surprise, she was so shaken, so white. Judith braced herself against fear and gave the baby to his nurse.

"Take him out, Martha. I don't feel very well. Just a headache—it will pass. By-by, little sweetheart!"

Then she went back bravely to face Dan.

"What do you want?" she said quietly.

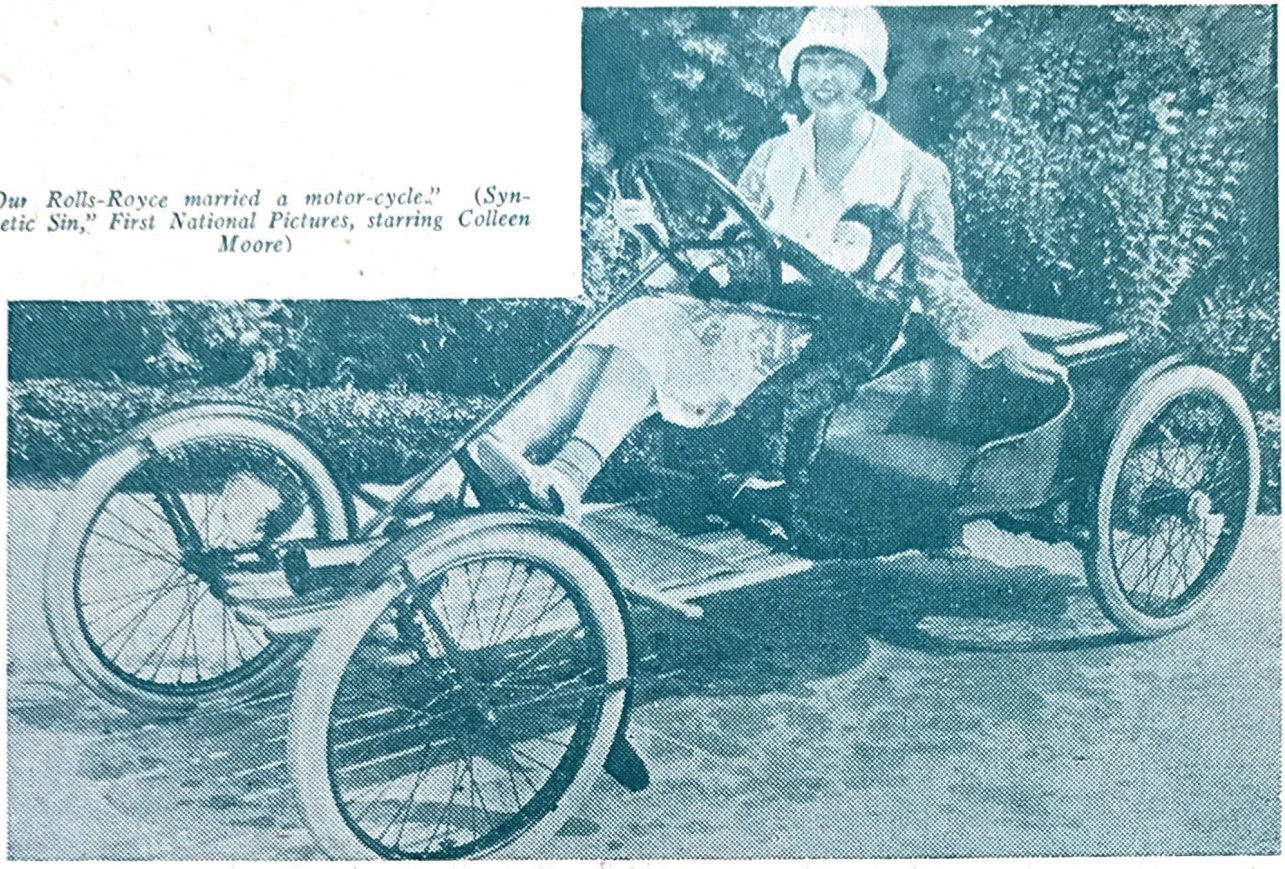
"Cash! That's straight, isn't it? You've got a pretty nice place here. You're expensive, these days, eh? Well, I want five thousand bucks."

"Don't be stupid. Do you think you can blackmail me?"

"Sure I do. You didn't tell your precious young husband anything about the Evening Star, I'll bet."

"Leave this house at once!"

(*Continued on page* 30)



"Our Rolls-Royce married a motor-cycle." (Synthetic Sin," First National Pictures, starring Colleen Moore)

Fun from the Flickers

By SONNY SMILES

"You should know how to behave at a wedding—you went to your own."

"I didn't go—they took me."

* * *

"If you're trying to insult me, be careful—I insult awful quick."

* * *

"If my appendix wasn't out, I know I'd have appendicitis again."

(Abie's Irish Rose, Paramount)

* * *

Mr. Newlywed—a tailor-maid man—cut on the bias. ("Newlyweds' Excuse.")

* * *

Swampscott, New York—one of those towns so low that the worm laughs in the early bird's face. ("The Gate Crasher," Universal.)

* * *

Dick Henshaw, bill-poster and detective—spending his life waiting for crimes to happen. ("The Gate Crasher.")

"Either you or I must do this by yourself, because alone we can't do it together." ("The Gate Crasher.")

* * *

"Oscar always points to the thief. He may be wrong, but he never makes a mistake." ("The Gate Crasher.")

* * *

"This is a hard case—get me some soft water." ("The Gate Crasher.")

* * *

"Just think, Doc, if we go any higher, we'll see stars."

"If we should make a sudden descent, the result would be the same." ("The Collegians," Universal.)

* * *

"Sweetheart, I love you. Marry me and end it all."

* * *

Drug store sandwiches are like old shoes—the tongue never wears out. (Educational.)

It is a tale more enthralling than a best seller, this story of

The Rise of Fannie Brice

By CHRISTINE HAMILTON

SYNOPSIS

Fannie Borach, the little girl with the big heart and bigger dreams, was growing up in Brooklyn after her family moved there from Newark, New Jersey. She ran and shouted and laughed with the other girls and boys of her age, played hookey from school, sang songs in her queer, husky, attractive voice and imitated popular vaudeville actors of the day in a way that convulsed her friends. But, however full her life was with her own fun, she always had time to spread happiness over those who were poorer than she. She had a positive passion for protection and kindness—even to the point of stealing loaves of bread and other things from her mother's kitchen to give to others who were hungry. She was the friend of all the world—long-legged Fannie, with her quaint young face and lovely green eyes. And she dreamed, always, of "going on the stage".

And then, one night—it was Amateur Night at Keeney's and she and her chum, Hannah, had not enough money for two tickets—Fannie had an idea: She and Hannah would say they were putting on an act, they would see the show from backstage and then bolt before the manager told them to go on. But the plan did not work out as they expected. The manager, seeing the eager child close beside him, hearing the insistent voice, "Say, Mister, when do I go on?" suddenly took her by the shoulders and ran her onto the stage. She was there, alone, and the house was clamoring for her to sing. So Fannie sang—and the crowd applauded.

She went home that night with the first prize—ten dollars— and the dream of going on the stage growing brighter and nearer in her heart.

* * *

THAT night "Fannie Brice" was born—although she did not change her name till a year later.

"And now, ladies-'n-gennlemen, I'm pleased-ta pree-sent ta you tha Brooklyn Favorite, Miss Fannie Borach, who will give some of her o-riginal songs an' imitations!"

Time had slipped by during that year and Fannie had haunted Amateur Nights from one end of Brooklyn to the other. She had become a regular prize-winner, a well-known figure to the noisy, warm-hearted audiences. They loved her —and with reason; *she* loved them.

A wise man once said that the only way to have a friend is to *be* one. Fannie Borach had that sort of a soul; she gave herself, generously, impulsively, fully. There was no searching for effect, no pose in her artistry. It was a rush of glad emotion, reaching out and enveloping those who heard her sing. She never laughed *at* people; she laughed *with* them, drawing the whole world into the circle of her personality and making it feel what she felt. She was Real.

Few people, perhaps, realized why she stopped attending Amateur Nights and went to get what she called, "a regular job", at the Eighty-Third Street Theatre in New York. It was not altogether that she felt that she was "too good" for those shows, even though she was pretty sure of pulling down the prize every time she appeared. Certainly it was not that she found the thing impractical, for she was making from sixty to seventy dollars a week during the season. The motivating reason seemed to be that she felt that it wasn't quite fair. She had made her reputation and her standing could no longer be called quite "amateur". There were other boys and girls who were maknig their first appearances at those "Nights". Was Fannie Borach going to crowd them out? Perhaps she thought of that first night of all, at Keeney's, and wondered if she would have won that amazing ten-dollar prize if there had been a well-known and popular local singer on the bill. That was one reason. And another was the driving flame in her heart, the ambition that would never let her rest on her laurels but drove her ever onward—even though the road she had to travel was rocky.

So Fannie Borach took her first job in Manhattan and worked harder than she had ever worked in her life.

Those were the days when they were beginning to feature illustrated popular songs, throwing a gaudy picture on the screen—a stereopticon or "magic lantern" slide—showing sentimental lovers leaning over a gate in the moonlight, strolling, entwined, through shady lanes or looking longingly after disappearing sails. A soloist sang the song as long as the picture stayed on the screen and, when it was jerkily withdrawn and the words of the chorus slipped into its place, the whole house raised their voices in hearty harmony. Everybody had a good time, anyhow, and, up there at the Eighty-Third Street Theatre, Fannie

Fannie Brice was never what the makers of magazine covers would call "pretty" but the heart-flame in the pale, piquant face, the glowing fire in the warm green eyes make her almost beautiful.

Borach sang the songs and drew the crowds after her wailing, poignant voice.

BUT that was not all. She sold tickets, she painted signs and she played the piano. She didn't know very much about playing the piano but she played it just the same. Nobody minded a little thing like that; in fact, she proved herself ready to jump into any tight place and help, whether it was on the stage, behind it or under it. She gave all she had, every moment—and always had more to give.

The girl in the box-office believed in Fannie. She had ambitions, too, and the two girls used to talk over their chances and plan for the famous years ahead. Fannie thought that probably her friend had a better chance—she was pretty and cute and blonde.

"I'm thin and lanky," said Fannie, "and my nose is big and so is my mouth. And my eyes are green—"

If their conversation had been held in these days, the other would have replied:

"Yes, dearie, but you have IT and that's worth everything."

Truly, Fannie was never what the makers of magazine covers would call "pretty". But she had so much more than prettiness. That same slim "lankiness" of hers was a delight to watch, so supple and swift it was, so subtly transformed, on the instant, from grotesque laughter-raising mimicry to lines of brooding beauty. Her hair was a wavy mass, light-brown and abundant; her narrow face, rather pale, showing up in contrast the

mobile mouth and splendid eyes. Even the big nose held character. Have not all famous personalities had big noses? What of Napoleon, Julius Caesar, Washington—ever so many more?

Anyway, her box-office pal believed in the "something" that Fannie possessed and it was she who saw Sam Harris's ad for chorus girls. He was putting on a show called "The Talk of New York". She told Fannie about it and Fannie went round to his office.

He did not ask to hear her sing, which rather disappointed her, but he engaged her for twenty-three dollars a week. Fannie Borach glowed. She was *really* "on the stage" now—in an honest-to-goodness New York show! And when they heard her *sing!* She lived for that moment.

REHEARSALS were called. There was the great Sam Harris and there beside him was George M. Cohan, sitting out in front. Somebody handed out songs and the girls clustered round the piano. They were going to sing all together, but— but— wasn't Fannie going to have a chance to be heard? The piquant face with its determined nose and wide mouth took on an expression of worry. Cohan and Harris weren't going to ask her to sing—they didn't seem to care whether they heard her or not. Well, they'd *have* to hear her. And they did. At the closing line of every verse, Fannie Brice held onto the last note with all her strength.

The big, booming voice had its effect. Suddenly there was a yell from George M.:

"Hey, you! Don't hold those notes so long!"

Fannie stopped holding the notes and smiled back at him happily. Anyway, she had been noticed!

She was noticed again, two weeks later. They were dancing then, and the going was hard. Fannie could dance by herself, but she could not dance with others. Perhaps it was a sub-conscious urge to be "different"; perhaps she just couldn't make those long limbs of hers obey orders. Anyhow, she flung out a wild right foot when the "ponies" were prancing with a left, and her exuberant left came forward when the others were pawing the ground with a right. The music tripped along too fast for her; she got so fussed she couldn't remember which was right and which was left at all and she couldn't keep in line.

And so there came a chorused howl from Cohan and Harris in unison:

"Back to the kitchen!"

And out she went.

When she got home, she told Mother that they thought she was too thin for the chorus.

She could have gone back to the Eighty-Third Street Theatre, but that was not her way. Fannie Brice has never retraced her footsteps. That flame in her soul urged her onward, up the rocky road, and now she knew that, if she was to attain anything like her ambition, she must learn to dance.

A MRS. Rachel Lewis had inserted an ad in the papers offering to train girls for the stage. Fannie and Fannie's mother—who probably knew, as mothers do know those things, more of the history of her daughter's brief experience with Cohan and Harris than she let on—went along to Mrs. Lewis's office on Thirty-Fourth Street.

Rachel Lewis looked the girl over. She saw that she was dealing with something different from the ordinary run of stage-struck girls. She felt, it may be, the presence of that heart-flame of Fannie's, the glowing fire that shone in the warm green eyes and made the pale, piquant face almost beautiful. She agreed to train Fannie Borach—but she wanted two hundred and fifty dollars for it.

Fannie's slender shoulders drooped, but Mrs. Borach came to the rescue. Not for nothing was she a practical, value-getting Frenchwoman and a mistress of shrewd bargaining as are all the women of her race. As the quick words flashed back and forth, Fannie's eyes brightened again. In the end, she was taken on as a pupil of Rachel Lewis at the conservative fee of thirty-five dollars.

It is problematical whether Rachel Lewis was a wonderful teacher but it is perfectly certain that she was a busy and active one, and she gave the young Fannie experience—mostly, says Fannie, in *sewing!* Mrs. Lewis put on her own shows and took them on the road. She planned the costumes and made them over from others, and, discovering the deftness and skill of the girl's long fingers, she appointed her wardrobe mistress extraordinary—very extraordinary.

The first show was called "The Ballad Girl" and, besides making her own yellow cheese-cloth costume, Fannie had to do a Spanish dance. Looking back from the heights along the rocky road, Fannie Brice smiles—amusedly but tenderly, too—at the picture of fourteen-year-old Fannie Borach in that yellow cheese-cloth dress. Young Fannie's legs were long and thin, her arms were

(Continued on page 31)

A lovely, wistful, piquant face was Pat's, framed in its red-brown curls.

Ted Rogers was the handsome young barker and manager of the sideshow.

"Life is pretty much like a circus," said P. W. Melrose. "Everybody's fighting to get into the main tent!" But there is many a brave heart, many a false one, life and love and danger and friendship even in

The Sideshow

By CHRISTINE HAMILTON

LIFE looked good to P. W. Melrose that day. Platt, of Platt and Russell's Mammoth Circus, had come around to the winter quarters of the Melrose outfit and offered to buy him out—and had been refused. The great little man grinned gently as he thought of it. He had booked his show just ahead of the Platt Circus all along the route and Platt was mad. He was mad because his rival had gotten ahead of him and madder because that rival was Melrose—Melrose, the man who had risen from the midget show to become the owner of the whole concern, Melrose of the diminutive body and the mighty mind.

"Maybe you'll be glad to sell out at a quarter the price—some day," he had threatened darkly.

And P. W. Melrose, looking over his sleek horses, ponderous elephants and prosperous outfit, had smiled genially.

"Maybe," he had replied.

Things looked good, he reflected. True, Bowen, the canvas boss, seemed inclined to give trouble, but he was a capable hand. Melrose decided that Bowen's bark was worse than his bite. He'd be all right if an eye was kept on him. The little man strolled to the steps of his palatial private car which stood on the siding and was about to mount when he heard himself addressed and, turning, saw a turbaned figure at his side.

"Sahib, I am Ghandi the Great. I can foretell the future and do many magics of the East. Per-

This is an adaption of Columbia Pictures' screen presentation of the original story by Howard J. Green. Erle C. Kenton directed, with Marie Prevost appearing as Pat Porter, Ralph Graves as Ted Rogers, "Little Billy" as P. W. Melrose, Alan Roscoe as Ghandi the Great, Pat Harmon as Bowen and Texas Madesen, Martha McGruger, Esteban Clemento, Janet Ford, Paul Dismute, Bert Price, Chester Morton and Jacques Ray as the attractions of the Sideshow.

mit that I read the fates for you in my crystal ball. I—"

"That's the bunk," said Melrose genially. "But you can show me what you can do. If you're any good, we may find a place for you in the sideshow. I reckon you're after a job—eh?"

"The sahib is all-seeing and gracious," said the Hindu, following the circus owner into his car.

Melrose sniffed. He did not care much for the look of the man—he was dark-skinned and sly of feature—but he might be able to do some good stunts.

"Go ahead," he commanded.

The Hindu peered into the shining ball.

"I see an offer of business—big business—lot of money—which the sahib would be wise to accept."

"Been listening in on me and Platt, huh? Well you guessed wrong this time. What—"

"I see the face of a beautiful girl who will soon come into your life."

"Listen, fella, haven't you got something better than that old line to hand out? Let's see the girl!"

But his superior smile faded as he came round the table to look into the crystal, for there *was* the face of a girl there—a lovely, wistful, piquant face, framed in brown curls. In a moment the explanation came to him. She must have mounted the steps of the car and looked through the glass door, then, seeing him occupied, had gone. He gave a sharp exclamation and opened the door, but the girl was out of sight. The Hindu smiled subtly. P. W. Melrose was suddenly annoyed.

"Get along—get out!' he said. "Go along to Ted Rogers. He's in charge of the concessions. If there's a place for you in the sideshow, he'll give it to you."

But, at that moment, Ted, himself, came round the corner of the car, and with him was a girl—*the* girl.

"This is Patricia Parker, Chief. You remember the 'Parker Family' act—Rex, Regina and Princess Pat? This is Pat. Her father's sick and her mother is looking after him, so the act is broken up. Can we find a place for her?"

Melrose looked up at the girl and was swept by a sudden great longing to be as other men were, big and strong and handsome—like Ted Rogers, for instance. Sometimes, for all the success he had made of his life, he felt cheated—and this was one of the times. He squared his small shoulders and mentally scolded himself for the passing thought.

"Come in and we'll talk it over," he said. "There's a Hindu fakir out there who seems to be well up on his stuff. I practically promised him a job just now. He'll need an assistant. Will you take that, Princess Pat?"
the main tent?"

"I worked hard to get out of the sideshow," she answered. "I— I rather hate the idea of going back into it. Isn't there something I can do in the main tent?"

"Life is like that," mused P. W. Melrose, "everybody struggling to get into the main tent. And, yet, my dear young lady, the sideshows are all part of the Big Show, too, and many a worth while performer has his place there. I came out of the sideshow myself—and I think I could work my way out of it again if I had to go back."

There was a quiet dignity about his manner that made the girl ashamed of her petulance. It was at that moment that she sensed the bigness of the little man opposite her. She reached a warm young hand across the table.

"I'll do it, Mr. Melrose—and thank you."

When she and Ted had gone, the circus owner sat looking at a professional photograph that Ted had handed him. It showed Rex, Regina and Princess Pat in costume for the Parker Family act—but it was not Rex or Regina that he saw. Presently he cut the glowing young face from the center of the card and fitted it into the back of his watch. Then he smiled a bit shamefacedly and looked up at the picture of Napoleon that hung on his wall.

"We permit ourselves to have a foolish thought at times, don't we?" he said.

THE great circus cars rolled out along the track and the tour began. Pat rehearsed her act with the Hindu and found warm friends among the motley people of the sideshow. There were Texas Madesen, the giant, Martha McGruger, the fat lady who tipped the scales at five hundred and eighty pounds and was as happy as she was heavy, the knife-thrower, Esteban, and his dusky partner, Janet, who occupied the platform next to hers in the sideshow tent, besides the fire-eater, Jacques, and Chester Morton, the living skeleton, and Bert Price, tattooed man—all good troupers and real folks. But the one she liked best of all, the one she liked more and more as the days went by was the handsome young barker and manager of the sideshow, Ted Rogers.

So Princess Pat became the assistant of Ghandi the Great.

And he liked her. A more vibrant tone came into his cheery voice, a brighter twinkle to his blue eyes when he leaped upon the small platform that held Ghandi the Great, Princess Pat and a large wicker hamper.

"Ladies and gentlemen, we will now see the most daring, death-defying mystery ever shown in this country! This beautiful girl will permit herself to be bound hand and foot and gagged! Then she will enter this basket which will immediately be padlocked! And, then, ladies and gentlemen —listen attentively—then Ghandi the Great will *stab through the basket with six razor-sharp swords,* completely transfixing it! And, yet, when the basket is opened, this dauntless girl will emerge unharmed! It is one of the greatest mysteries of the secret East, ladies and gentlemen! Remember! Bound—she cannot move! Gagged—she cannot cry for aid! Watch closely—*now!*"

PAT got a lot of amusement out of the gasps of wonder she could hear as she crouched on the tiny trap-door under the platform, waiting for the signal that meant it was time for Bowen, the foreman, to pull her up again into the basket for her triumphant emergence.

The only person she did not like was Ghandi. There was something malevolent about him, something evil in the long, whispered talks he held with Bowen—conversations that were immediately silenced whenever they saw that she was near. On the other hand, she grew to appreciate the personality of the grand little man who held all their destinies in his small, capable hands. He was so courteous and so wise, so close to every matter that affected his beloved circus and so understanding of the human problems that came to him, as boss, for judgment, that her heart ached with sympathy for him when she saw that things were beginning to go wrong with the Melrose outfit.

Things were indeed going wrong. A strange streak of bad luck seemed to have struck the circus—a "jnix" that caused disquieting thoughts

among the performers. It was not only that the weather changed and they played to an empty tent while sheets of rain poured down outside—that could not be helped, it was part of the chances of the game. But other things were happening. Men were mysteriously hurt putting up the canvas, tools vanished, the canvas men began to murmur openly—and then came the first fatality. There was the usual tense silence in the main tent during a daredevil trapeze act by Young Kane, one of the most popular performers. Suddenly there was a crash, a scream—and Young Kane hurtled down, to lie, broken, in the middle of the sawdust ring. He was carried out to the hospital tent, but it was too late to do anything for him. One more trapeze performer would never catch the flying bars again, and a woman wept—and a child was fatherless.

Pat Parker, seeing golden-haired little Jean Kane innocently at play among the wagons, felt hot tears rise in her eyes. There was another small figure out there, too, the figure of a diminutive man whose shoulders drooped—the Boss. Little Jean stole up to him and slipped soft fingers into his.

"Why do you look so sorry?" she said. "Didn't my Daddy do so good?"

The sudden agony on the little man's face wrung Pat's heart. She saw him turn away from the child and heard his voice, husky and shaking.

"He did—all a man could—Jeannie."

Pat came and sat down beside them on an overturned box. Melrose thrust his hand into his pocket and brought out a thick roll of money which he gave her.

"For Mrs. Kane," he said in that husky voice. "And tell her that, as long as I have a circus, *his* salary will continue."

The girl's impulsive hand pressed his shoulder.

"Mr. Melrose, I think you're the finest man I ever knew!"

Then, lest tears should blind her, she led the little girl away and left the big little man alone.

A prop man came to him as he was returning from the hospital tent a little later.

"Look at this, Chief—it's the wire rope of Kane's swing, and it's *filed half through!* No wonder it broke. Say—someone around here is playing a dirty game."

"Looks that way, Jack. Too many things are happening."

"There was another near accident yesterday, Chief. That axe-thrower in the side show loosened the board he throws 'em at and, as it fell, he threw another that went right through the Hindu's fortune-telling tent. You ought to've heard how he carried on! I guess that was a real accident, though. That board ain't so safe. I mean, no matter how firm you prop it, it gets shaken loose with the pounding of those thrown axes. Anyhow, it wouldn't hurt the circus none if something happened to the Hindu. It's different about poor Kane."

THE "jinx" still pursued the Melrose circus. There came another rainy day with the wagons skidding through hub-deep mud and the great pachyderme sloshing along miry roads. The Boss, in oilskins and sou'wester, waded across the selected fair grounds and hailed Ted Rogers and Pat.

"Say, what are those men all lined up at the pay-wagon for? Why aren't they getting out the stuff?"

Ted's handsome face grew stern and worried.

"They're quitting, Boss. I have hardly enough men left to put up the canvas. Platt and Russell are following us along the route and these fellows have only to quit here and wait to be picked up. There's a lot of bad talk going around."

As he spoke, they heard a violent explosion and saw the pay-wagon heel over while a mass of smoke and fire rushed from it. The paymaster was thrown several feet from the burning wagon as though by the force of a terrific explosion.

"Good God!" groaned Ted. "Another accident!"

But Melrose did not hear him. He was hurrying as fast as his short stature would permit to see that the injured paymaster was being properly taken care of. As he sat by the bed in the hospital tent, he heard the paymaster's faint voice.

"Boss, that stove didn't explode naturally! It was dynamited!"

"Don't worry, old man," answered Melrose, "I'm going to find out who's at the bottom of all these things. And when I do—!"

His face was full of bitter anger as he recrossed the grounds and was brought up short by the sound of furious voices. In the center of a crowd of men stood Bowen, the canvas boss, shouting:

"An' I'll bet that little runt, Melrose, blew up the wagon himself so we shouldn't get our pay! I'll bet—"

The tall figure of Ted Rogers suddenly surged through the knot of disgruntled men.

"Don't you dare talk like that, Bowen!"

His fist shot out and caught the rebel full on

"Ladies and Gentlemen, we will now see the most daring mystery ever shown in this country!"

the chin. Bowen went down but was up again in a flash and a free-for-all seemed to be starting when P. W. Melrose, physical midget but mental giant, burst into the center of the group and shouted:

"Stop! Stop it this minute, I say!" They knew that tone—and the force of the personality behind it. Ted swung his Chief high to his shoulder and held him there above the listening faces. "Men," P. W. Melrose said clearly, "something is wrong with this outfit—and it's worrying me a great deal more than it is you. But I'm not going to be yellow—I'm not going to quit—run away—join up with Platt and Russell just because things aren't smooth and easy. I'm going to find out what's at the bottom of all this stuff—and I'm going to fight it and lick it. And every man of you who is a *man* will stick with me and see it through with me!"

And, at the end of that short speech, he gave them one of the sunny smiles that transformed his small face into a thing of light and power. He "got to" them, and they all went cheerfully away to their allotted tasks, all, that is, but Bowen whose sulky visage was dark and scowling.

"GEE, the Big Chief is great!" Ted Rogers said to Pat as he rejoined her. "He certainly hit through to them when he mentioned Platt and Russell. What would you say to me if I told you I'd had a note from them? Look!"

She read:

"Mr. Melrose, you're the finest man I ever knew!"

"Dear Mr. Rogers: We have been informed that the Melrose Circus is soon to go out of business. We wish to inform you that there is a position in our organization for you at a substantial increase on your present salary, should you desire to join us. We advise you to seize this opportunity at once as it may not be open indefinitely."

Pat tossed her head and returned the letter.

"Well?" teased Ted, and, then, seeing that she looked really hurt at the possibility he suggested, he took another letter from his pocket.

"This is the way I accepted," he said.

And this time she read:

"Platt and Russell, Sirs: As long as P. W. Melrose has a yard of canvas to his outfit, I stick with him. Rogers."

Her whole piquant face broke into smiles and her lips were very near his. He drew her nearer.

"Well—now that we're going to be married—" He smiled, but she slipped away, laughing.

"Not here and now, Ted. I insist upon a more romantic spot for a proposal than right out in the middle of the circus grounds. Besides, I have to go and dress for my act."

"Hurry up then, darling! I'll come around in about ten minutes to tell you how you look!"

When they had gone, Ghandi, the Hindu, slipped stealthily from his hiding place and picked up the envelope that had fallen.

THAT evening Pat ran up the steps of P. W. Melrose's private car and knocked at the door. The little Boss welcomed her in and gestured toward the dining table that stood ready.

"You're just in time for dinner. Won't you have it with me?"

She noticed that there were two chairs at the table and two places set and she hesitated.

"I wanted to speak to you only for a minute—and you're expecting some one."

"I always prepare for—pleasant company," he answered, reddening slightly, and the girl's quick sympathy caught a note of poignance in the situation. He was lonely—terribly lonely—this great little man, so lonely that he kept that second place set so that he could at least play with the idea that there was a comrade opposite. She sat down and began to tell him why she had come.

"I've been rehearsing a new act and I want you to see it, Mr. Melrose. I'm hoping that you'll let me get into the main tent if you like it."

"I'll see it tomorrow," he promised.

There came a knock on the door. Melrose opened it and stepped outside. Pat could hear that he was talking to Bowen.

"I think you better see this letter, Boss. It was picked up by one of the men and as it was open it was read."

Melrose took the envelope, scowled as he saw the Platt and Russell engraving and slipped a typed sheet from it. He read:

"Fine work! We have Melrose howling for help already. Keep up the little series of accidents and it won't be long now. Your check is waiting for you here."

The bottom seemed suddenly to have dropped out of the small Chief's world. That Ted Rogers, his friend, his right-hand man, should be the one to work against him! Was it possible? Yet here was the damning evidence. It did not cross his mind, so utterly upset was he, that there might have been foul play here, too. He was tired out with worry and misery. This was the last straw. Uncontrolled rage burned in his heart.

"It seems that there is one man too many in this circus. Look out of the window. We have started up the mountain track. If a man fell from the train now—Have you ever 'red-lighted' anyone?"

"Not yet, Boss," the man said meaningly.

He went back along the train, saw Ted finishing his meal in the diner and called to him.

"Will you come out on the platform for a minute, Mr. Rogers? I think something's wrong."

Ted got up and followed.

"What do you mean—wrong?"

"Look out ahead there! Do you see any *red lights* on the track?"

"What are you trying to do," shouted Ted, "red light me?"

A fist struck him on the jaw.

BACK in the big private car, Pat looked at the Chief's white, unhappy face.

"What is it? You've heard something?"

Wordlessly he handed her the letter. She read it and looked up in amazement.

"Chief, Ted did not do any such thing—this is a forgery! Why—I saw the letter they wrote him, asking him to join them. And I saw his reply, too! You never had a more loyal friend in the world than Ted. Wait till you see him and ask him."

The little man before her looked at her with eyes that were suddenly dark with agony.

"We'll never see Ted again," he whispered.

(Continued in the next issue)

When a man has made money in the big city, he remembers—if he is the right sort of man—his old friendships and his boyhood pals. And, yet, Vic Arnold's romance was shaken to its depths by his faithfulness to

The Hometowners

By GEORGE ARNST

THE train sped onward through the night toward New York, and Lottie Bancroft watched the worried face of her husband with kindly, understanding eyes.

"What's bothering you, dear? Aren't you glad that Vic asked you to be his best man on Monday? Heavens! Think of Vic Arnold, confirmed bachelor and your oldest friend, being caught at last!"

"Well, my dear, he was best man at our wedding and I guess this gives me a chance to get even." Her husband smiled teasingly and patted her hand. They understood each other, those two. He went on, "But I must own I'm kind of worried about Vic. He's made quite a bit of money, I've heard, and you know how it is—a fellow with cash is a mark for the wrong kind of girl, often enough. I'm sort of glad he asked me to come on to New York. Maybe I can look over the ground and see that people are playing square with him. Vic's been my pal ever since we were boys together. I'd hate to see anyone put anything over on him."

"Now, you listen, 'P. H.'!" his partner retorted. "You stop worrying about Vic. I'll bet he can take care of himself, and folks who interfere in their friends' love affairs aren't welcome, often as not. I think——"

"Well, I don't mind your thinking," her husband interrupted, "but it isn't going to alter my opinion a mite."

His ruddy, honest face took on those curves of stubborn certainty that she understood so well and she knew it was no use talking. All the same, she began to be rather sorry that she was not going right through to New York with him. She had promised to stop off for a few hours with her brother in Albany, coming on to the city the next day. P. H. would have a whole evening to "look over the ground" and assure himself that his old friend was all right. Lottie Bancroft knew

Was this lovely girl just a gold digger as P. H. thought, or was she really in love with his old pal, Vic?

This is an adaptation of Warner Brothers' screen presentation of the original stage play by George M. Cohan. The scenario was written by Addison Burkhart and Murray Roth. Bryan Foy directed, with Richard Bennet appearing as Vic Arnold, Doris Kenyon as Beth Calhoun, Robert McWade as P. H. Bancroft, Robert Edeson as Mr. Calhoun, Gladys Brockwell as Mrs. Bancroft, John Miljan as Joe Roberts, Vera Lewis as Mrs. Calhoun, Stanley Taylor as Wally Calhoun, James T. Mack as Casey and Patricia Caron as the maid.

her husband and loved him, but she hoped he would not do or say anything rash.

VIC Arnold greeted his old friend with open arms and led him out of the Grand Central Station to a great, glittering limousine that made P. H. open his eyes. On the drive to Vic's bachelor apartment, it became more and more evident to the man from South Bend that fortune had been very kind to his pal. Vic laughingly agreed, confessing to a tidy little fortune of "more than a million" and more coming.

"And, now that I've found the dearest girl in the world as well," he went on, "I feel mighty good."

In the well-appointed and luxurious apartment, with a tall cool glass on the table beside him, P. H. began to talk to Vic as he had been, as the elder, Vic's counselor and mentor in the good old days. Vic Arnold expanded in the atmosphere of friendship and happily told of his business success and his romance, glowing as he described his fiancée and her family.

"Dear, good people, all of them! Her brother, Wally, is in my office—a brilliant youngster, a regular comer. He started at sixty a week—I'm giving him fifteen thousand a year now."

Old P. H. Bancroft frowned. This didn't sound so good. Maybe the young fellow was taking advantage of the fact that his boss was in love with his sister, Beth. He went on putting judicious questions. His kindly, worried frown deepened as he heard that Beth's father had invented a patent bottle-washer, that Vic was financing it and putting it on the market.

"It's a *good* bottle-washer," Vic explained. "Another firm has been dickering for it for quite a while but I think it's too good to let go."

"H'm," P. H. commented. "And the mother? What does she get out of you?"

"Now, don't talk like that, Ban!" said Vic. "They aren't trying to get anything—they're real people. Her mother? Why, she's just a dear, simple, big-hearted American mother. I love her."

"And the girl herself—does she love you? There's a big difference in your ages, you know. What is she—twenty-two? And you're—why, you must be all of forty-five. Gee, Vic, I wouldn't say what I'm going to say if I wasn't fond of you—I guess you know that—but I have to say what's on my mind. Are these people square? It looks to me as if you're being played for an easy mark. Gosh, I don't like it, Vic!"

"Now, Ban, you stop that line. Will you wait till you've met them before you judge? I know you're sincere, old man, but you're all wrong, honestly you are."

P. H. lapsed into uneasy thought. He had heard a great deal about New Yorkers. They were pretty smart—New Yorkers. They were always ready to play a hard game with men from the great open spaces and Vic—Vic was such a good scout. It would be tough if he got caught that way. When he met the prospective brother-in-law, Wally, he was not reassured. That young man was so easy in manner, so airy, so blithe in his talk of huge sums of money. And there was something queer between Vic and Wally's friend, Joe Roberts—P. H. could see that.

Wally had brought Roberts round in the late evening. It seemed that Roberts, a tall young fellow about Wally's own age, had mislaid his dress pumps and Wally had assured him that Vic wore the same size and would lend him a pair.

"Good old Vic would give you the shirt off his back!" Wally said.

P. H. didn't like the sound of that remark, either.

Vic *had* lent Roberts the pumps, and P. H. had heard a few words that passed between them.

"I'm glad we're friends again, Vic, in spite of everything. Beth—" Roberts had begun, and Vic had answered:

"Let's not discuss Beth, Joe. You'll get over it in time. Sure, we'll be friends."

When they had left the room, Wally said:

"My sister, Beth, might have married Roberts. His heart was just about broken when she got engaged to Vic. But the whole family like Vic better. I'm mighty glad she did, too."

"I expect you are, young man," P. H. said dryly.

Things were beginning to formulate in his mind. Here was this youth, Roberts, young, good-looking—presumably poor. (Wasn't he borrowing evening pumps?) And he had been in love with the girl, Beth. And her family was "so glad" she was marrying Vic. H'm! It sure looked pretty positive. The more Wally talked about himself, his prospects, the business and the way he had "turned down a big offer from Old Man Brown of Wicklif and Brown, just to stay with Vic", the more certain the man from South Bend became. This boy was a four-flusher, with his talk about turning down big offers—bigger offers than fifteen thousand a year—likely story! He began

to hate Wally. The upshot of all this was that, after Wally and Roberts had gone, P. H. faced his old friend across the table and pronounced his dictum:

"I'm sorry, Vic, but I've got to speak frankly. I can't let you throw your life away without putting my oar in—even if you never speak to me again. Vic, this whole gang is 'doing' you. I——"

Vic Arnold, sensing the trembling sincerity in the Westerner's voice, controlled the annoyance that he felt rising within him.

"Go on, Ban," he said.

"Well, Vic, that kid, Wally—that fifteen-thousand-a-year Boy Scout—has been boasting about what he said to 'Old Man Brown' and how he turned him down."

"That was loyal of the boy, you must admit."

"Vic, they're *fooling* you with all that talk. They aren't your sort. You admitted that the old man, Beth's father, was in the liquor business—a saloon keeper."

"He's retired. And his bottle washer——"

"You're hedging, Vic. She's a saloon-keeper's daughter—and she's simply helping her family gyp you."

This was too much. Vic Arnold's patience blew up with a bang and he rose to his feet.

"You'll have to apologize, Ban."

"I won't apologize. I have to say what I think and I think she's a gold-digger."

Slap! The blow from Vic's open hand seemed to fall upon the very heart of P. H. and the two old friends stood, almost equally stunned, on each side of the friendship that had crashed into pieces between them.

"You're the only man that could get away with that—and live," P. H. said. "Good-by, Vic. Where's my hat and coat?

"Oh, Ban, Ban, I lost my temper! You said things that no man could stand! Gee, Ban, don't go!"

"Where's my hat and coat?" said the man from South Bend. "I'm going to the Waldorf."

And he went.

LOTTIE, arriving early in the morning, was greeted at the station by an unhappy man, haggard with sleeplessness, misery and hunger, for poor old Ban had been too heart-broken to eat since he left Vic.

She heard the whole story, over and over again—Vic's blindness, Wally's boastfulness, the probable ruin that the Calhoun family was going to bring down on Vic's head, the broken friendship of years—all of it.

"Vic, I can't let you throw yourself away without putting my oar in. This whole gang is 'doing' you."

Up in their room at the Waldorf, it was just as bad. Vic kept telephoning in, asking to speak to Ban, while Ban, the sting of that slap still on his cheek, steadily refused to see him. Lottie was almost distracted. Then Vic implored her to speak to him, even if Ban would not. He came up, and she saw that he was almost as pathetically unhappy as his old pal.

"These men!" she thought, trying to make peace between them. "These *men!*"

Then Vic, playing what he was sure was his star card, said that Beth was waiting downstairs and begged Lottie to meet her. Lottie said she would be glad to, but stubborn old Ban kept himself shut up in the bedroom of their suite.

Lottie had to admit that Beth looked pretty—

and sweet, too. But she was obviously uneasy, obviously aware that something was in the air. To make matters still worse, Wally, hearing that Vic and his sister were with Ban and being quite unconscious of any dispute, came cheerfully blowing in, with his father and mother in tow. They had all arranged to meet at the Waldorf for lunch and he thought, of course, that the Bancrofts would be of the party. Lottie tried to explain that P. H. was feeling ill, but that statement cut no ice with the enthusiastic Wally.

"Well, that's too bad," he said, "but we're old pals. He won't mind me."

He flung open the door of Ban's retreat and charged in, shaking the furious old hometowner violently by the hand.

"And I want you to meet my Dad. Come on in, Governor. This is Ban, you know—Vic's old pal."

P. H. felt his hand being even more violently shaken by a stocky, ruddy little man who, to his stern Western eyes, had "bartender" written all over him.

"Too bad you feel sick," he boomed. "I've got some stuff on my hip that will put you right in a jiffy. Want a snifter?"

"No, I don't," Ban said positively.

"All right, all right! Then you sit right down here and I'll give you a massage that will start your circulation singing. I know what to do for fellows that are under the weather. Many a man in the old days would come into my place with a dark brown taste in his mouth and——"

"Take your hands off me!" howled P. H., scarlet with fury. He turned round to Mrs. Calhhoun and pretty Beth who had also come into the room. "Go away, all of you, robbers, highwaymen, four-flushers! I don't want to have anything to do with any of you!"

He was really a sick man, or he would never have let go like that. He was sick with misery and nerves—but they did not know that. There was a burst of indignation and surprise from the whole family of Calhouns. Mrs. Calhoun said that she had never been spoken to like that in her life; Beth said that she would die before she let P. H. stand up as best man at her wedding and old Calhoun said he wanted to sock Ban on the jaw. Wally was white with anger and poor Vic, hovering with Lottie outside the storm, begged everybody to keep calm and forget it—quite hopelessly. Here was a pretty kettle of fish! What on earth was he going to do? Finally he followed Ban out into the other room and put a hand on his shoulder.

"Do come and make friends, old man. Gee, you're the only friend I've had since I was a kid—close, you know. Come on in and tell the folks you didn't mean the things you said. Come in, Ban."

"I won't. I know I didn't mean it—all of it—but I won't——"

Vic's tone changed.

"You're the most stubborn, pig-headed, mulish old goat I ever knew."

P. H. gasped.

"Me, pig-headed! Gosh——"

Slap!

It landed squarely across Vic's clean-shaven cheek and once more the two old pals stood, half-gasping, facing each other. Then Vic put up a hand and rubbed his cheek.

"You're the only man who could do that and get away with it." Suddenly he smiled. "We're even, Ban," he said. "I made you lose your temper, too. Come on now, shake hands."

The other thrust a trembling hand out and felt it caught and gripped. Somehow he was led into the other room, somehow managed to attempt a kind of reconciliation. But it was not so easy. The Calhouns were all up in the air over the thing and refused to accept anything in the way of an excuse. Poor Lottie was almost frantic. Finally the Calhoun family departed in high dudgeon and Lottie put a friendly hand on the shoulder of the distracted Vic.

"Go and make up with Beth, Vic, that's what matters. I'll handle Ban. You go to the girl."

But poor Vic found his work cut out for him when he tried to make up with Beth. She was hurt, deeply, and said so.

"Perhaps it's just as well, Vic—just as well we found this out before we married. I can see that you have a lurking doubt of me. That old friend of yours at least had the honesty to say what he thought. I begin to believe that you were thinking the same things, but hadn't the courage to say them. Here is your ring, Vic."

He took it, blindly.

"You don't care for me, Beth?"

"I care much too much for you to let things go on—this way," she said and left him, holding her head high like a young queen.

IN his misery, Vic turned to Ban. He invited him and Lottie to dinner and the theatre, trying in his loyal way to show his appreciation for

"I think I'd better come over there—and bring Beth with me."

Ban's stubborn devotion — even though it had wrecked his life. Ban, watching the course of events, heard that Wally had sent in his resignation to the office, announcing at the same time his new affiliation with the firm of Wicklif and Brown.

"So the boy was not four-flushing, after all!" thought P. H. and the thought was a revelation to him.

Another thing that came as a shock was the fact that a rival firm really *did* want old Calhoun's bottle-washer, and at a sum which would have given Vic a pretty profit. P. H. began to think very hard. It came to him suddenly that he had been a fool—and the thought hurt. It hurt worse when he saw Vic's well-loved face, drawn with unhappiness and yet trying bravely to keep cheery for the sake of his Hometowners. The last straw came when Wally entered with a velvet case which he had brought.

"Beth sent me along with it. She said you'd understand, Vic."

Vic dropped it into a chair without opening it. He understood well enough. The case contained the pearl necklace that was to have been his wedding present to the girl he loved. Before he left, Wally turned round to P.H.:

"I hope you're satisfied with what you've done. You came here with a lot of great ideas about New Yorkers—and you've tried to poison the mind of one of the finest men God ever made, using the sneakiest and most dangerous weapon in the world, a Main Street mind. Let me tell you that New Yorkers—if they're real people—have just as square and true and sincere characters as Main Streeters. Goodby."

"He shouldn't have said that," Vic commented when the door had slammed behind Wally, but Ban put out a shaking hand.

"Yes, he should, Vic—the boy was right. Oh, gee, Vic, what a mess I've made of your life!"

"Don't talk like that, old man—"

"Aw, shut up, Vic! I know what I am—a darned, meddling old devil—and I'll never forgive myself. And I meant so well—I meant so well!"

He dropped down into the big chair and hid his face in his hands. Vic was amazed. He did not know what to do. Surely Lottie would know.

"Lottie!" he called, going in search of her. "Lottie, come here!"

Ban, left alone, felt the hard edges of the jewel case in the chair beside him. Suddenly a thought struck him. The only way—the only thing to do. He opened the case, slipped the necklace from it and put it in his pocket. When Vic came back with Lottie, he was more composed.

"I'm all right now. Here, Vic, this is yours, isn't it?"

Vic took it, mechanically opened it and then gave a start of amazement.

"It's empty!"

"Is it? Gosh, what do you suppose happened? Young Wally wouldn't have taken it, would he? Maybe you'd better call up and find out if the

And perhaps for Beth and Vic the sun shone brighter because of the storm that had gone before.

girl put it in the box before she sent it."

Vic went to the phone. What he said brought a torrent from the Calhoun family. He turned away from the instrument.

"Wally thinks he'd better come over here and Beth, too. They're furious that you should think they had anything to do with the loss of the necklace. I told them no one thought anything of the kind, but they're coming. And Mr. and Mrs. Calhoun, too! Wally says he opened it only once, on the way here, to show to Joe Roberts."

"Perhaps *he* knows something about it, "Lottie suggested.

Vic laughed shortly.

"Joe needn't steal pearl necklaces. He's worth at least twenty million. Gosh, I was jealous of that boy before Beth said she cared for me! I, with my million, didn't bulk so big alongside of that. But, now, I suppose —— He's crazy about her."

P. H. almost reeled as another illusion was smashed. If Beth had turned down twenty million to marry Vic, she wasn't much of a gold digger, was she? Oh, gee!"

THE doorbell pealed and the Calhouns entered.

It was P. H. Bancroft who faced them, waving Vic and Lottie into the background. The newcomers tried to ignore him, but he was not to be ignored. If P. H. stood for "Pig-Head", as some who knew him had suggested, he could be as equally pig-headed in making amends as he was in making a mess of things.

"Before we talk about the loss of the necklace, folks, I want to say something. You"—he turned to Wally—"you said something before you left, something about a narrow Main Street mind. You were right and I was dead wrong. I'm here to apologize and to tell you—"

"But what about the pearls? You didn't bring us down here to apologize," old Calhoun broke in.

"The pearls? Oh, yes, here they are!" He fished them from his pocket and laid them in the velvet case. "I took them out of the box. It was the only way I could get you all to come down here. I knew you wouldn't come just to hear an old man confess that he had made a fool of himself—even if he was driven to it by his love for the best pal a man ever had and he couldn't bear the idea that his pal wasn't being treated right. Now do you see?" His voice was perilously near tears and the warm-hearted Calhouns felt their hurt feelings melt and give place to something very much like affection for the man who had given them so many uncomfortable hours that day. He was irresistible—old P. H. with his stubborn devotion and his Main Street mind! They went more than half-way to meet him when his final appeal reached them:

"Won't you show that New Yorkers can be as big-minded as they always say they are and forget that hash I nearly made of all of your plans? Vic will hang on to the bottle-washer, and Wally will continue as his right-hand-man in the office, and I'll—I'll be best man at your wedding, Beth —if you'll have me."

"You did it because you cared so much for Vic," Beth said softly and turned from him to the arms of her waiting lover.

Wally shook hands speechlessly and old Calhoun lightened the tension of the moment by suddenly shouting:

"The occasion demands a toast, ladies and gents! Come on, Maggie, let's mix 'em up a real one like we did in the old days."

And Lottie, with her arms round her husband, whispered:

"You sweet, old pig-head!"

THEODORE ROBERTS

In Memoriam

By MAURICE V. BOCHICCHIO

(The unexpected passing of Theodore Roberts on December 14th, 1928, will be mourned by a host of screen followers. His last film, "Noisy Neighbors," has been completed recently. His entire life was devoted toward furthering the silent and spoken drama, as he is equally noted for stage characterizations. It is with profound regret that patrons will forego the charm of his screen representations.)

You smile no more, for life appears to be
A flitting shadow on a silver screen,
Until we pen a tear-filled eulogy
Of memories enacted scene by scene.

Mad life backstage is not serene,
Nor on location's bustling lot.
Oh, "Grand Old Man of Stage and Screen,"
Sleep sweetly nigh a calmer spot.

But, though a human voice may die away,
Can we in truth forget "Old Homestead" and
"The Ten Commandments"? Echoes answer, "Nay'
These are eternal as the dripping sand."

The stage is set for life's romance,
For tragedy when death's voice calls;
The song ends with a circling dance,
And silently the curtain falls!

Gotham Gleanings

By LOUIS WESLYN

Such awful disasters! Such horrible scares!
Such frightful, mysterious scenes!

With Laura LaPlante as the star.

"THE LAST WARNING"

(A Universal Production, Reviewed at the Colony Theatre)

Another ridiculous mystery play,
Outlandish, as most of 'em are,
Appeared at the Colony, on old Broadway,
With Laura LaPlante as the star.

Montague Love was her leading support,
And I shall say this for the pair,
They acted as if it were all *pour le sport*,
Well knowing the film was "not there".

"A movie with sound that will startle you so!"
To quote the publicity chap,
And "startle" is right, for this cinema show
Will make you say, "Where am I at?"

Don't ask me to tell you the plot of the play,
That's something I cannot explain;
To those that are curious all I can say
Is this: You are seeking in vain.

In one of the scenes there's a lady who yells,
"Oh, heck, nothing matters!" She's right!
The audience wishes to chortle, "Hell's Bells!
We're all in a terrible plight!"

Such awful disaster! Such horrible scares!
Such frightful, mysterious scenes!
And ev'ryone asking, "Good gracious, who cares?"
And wondering what it all means.

Restless Youth

When Justice is blind, Love gives it eyes to see

By BERYLE POWERS

DIXIE Calhoun never meant any harm but she could no more help flirting than she could help breathing. It was just as much a part of her nature as the sunny disposition, the quick-witted repartee that made her the most popular girl at Stanton College. Everyone understood Dixie—everyone except George Baxter. Since she flirted with every man on the campus, he reasoned, there was scarcely a limit to her activities in this direction. So he invited her to a party at the hotel one night; at least, he said it was to be a party, but, when Dixie reached the suite he had engaged, she found that no one else was expected. Fortunately for her, although Baxter had locked the door of the living-room, she still had access to the bedroom. When she found out that he was deaf to her pleas for release, she locked herself in the other room. The boy took up his vigil on a couch outside her door but the liquor he had consumed during the evening soon had its effects and he fell fast asleep. This was Dixie's chance to escape. But the hotel detective had recognized her as a girl from the college and, unknown to Dixie, the register bore the name, Mrs. George Baxter. Innocent as Dixie was in this particular instance, she was immediately dismissed from the college by a unanimous vote of the school board.

This was disgrace enough but little did the girl dream that her thoughtless actions would follow her when she tried to make her way in the business world. Through the effort of an agent, Robert Haines, who was looking for other reward than a weekly commission, she obtained a position as private secretary to a rising young lawyer, Bruce Neil. It was a matter of only a few weeks when the study of law gave way to the study of love and Dixie promised to become the wife of her employer.

"You must meet my Dad," Bruce told her at once. "He is the district attorney. I am going to take you to see him tomorrow night."

Blissfully happy, Dixie prepared herself for the occasion. But alas for her dreams! Bruce's dearly beloved father turned out to be none other that the president of the school board that had dismissed Dixie from college. To him she was an immoral woman and, as such, not fit to become the wife of his son. When he found he could not bribe her to give up Bruce, he took advantage of her great love by threatening to ruin his career unless she promised to see nothing of him in the future. As an explanation to Bruce, he showed the check stub, not bothering to say that the girl had immediately torn the check in half. But even this, added to his highly colored account of her doings at college, did not shake the young man's faith in the girl he had asked to be his wife. Letters, telephone calls and telegrams were insistent, but Dixie refused to talk to him for fear John Neil would carry out his threat. But one day he caught her on the telephone unawares and insisted that he would be at her apartment at eight o'clock that night. So Dixie determined to crush his love for her no matter how great the price to herself. Robert Haines eagerly accepted her invitation to spend the evening with her—an invitation for which he had been begging from the day she first stepped into his office. When Bruce Neil opened the door—which she had purposely left unlocked—he found her in the close embrace of Robert Haines. Like the consummate little actress she was, she carried off the rôle of a flapper under the influence of liquor. Disgustedly, Bruce Neil closed the door upon her and his dreams. Her heartbroken sobs gave the first inkling to Robert Haines that he had been used as a catspaw. Furiously he demanded payment. He drove Dixie almost to the point of madness with his revolting love-making.

"Don't come near me or I'll ——," she threatened, raising a heavy vase with which to defend herself. But the man did not heed her warning. His arms went out to clasp her to him and the next minute the vase crashed down on his head and his lifeless body dropped at her feet. Dixie was still dazed when two policemen took her into custody.

* * *

THE murder trial of Dixie Calhoun was one of the most sensational on record. The beauty of the defendant had much to do with the interest in the case. It seemed so foreign to one of her sweet, gentle nature—and yet there was no doubting the evidence. The plea was that she had killed to defend her honor. The sob sisters made much of this and the tabloids reeked with heart-throbbing stories, with pictures of her at various vital moments of the trial. And, for some reason or other, the district attorney had never fought a case with so much enthusiasm, had never seemed more determined to give a prisoner the full penalty of the law. And, in blackening the character of the lovely young defendant, his chief aid was—George Baxter.

"Where were you on the night of December 8th?" he asked his star witness.

A hush fell over the court room as the answer came clearly:

"I spent most of the night with Miss Calhoun at the Shawnee Hotel."

A smile of satisfaction lit up the stern face of John Neil.

"A woman who has spent the night at a hotel as the wife of a man is not one who would kill to 'defend her honor'," he addressed the jury, then, almost gloating, recalled the defendant to the stand.

"And who is the father of the man you love?"

A wistful-eyed girl stood between father and son, the girl who had taught the former the lesson of love, the latter the fact that justice tempered with mercy is the only true justice.

"I didn't mean to kill him, but he tried to attack me, and I — I defended myself," Dixie sobbed.

"You suddenly objected to his attentions, I suppose," came the clear cold voice of the district attorney. "Where were your scruples when you were drinking and carousing with the man you killed?"

"I was not drinking, and I had him in my apartment for a proper reason."

The girl's voice was almost a whisper.

"But there were two glasses. Traces of whiskey were found in both."

"I only pretended to drink—I poured the liquor into a flower bowl."

"You say you killed him in self-defense. Why didn't you kill Mr. Baxter, too?"

Breathlessly the curiosity seekers waited for her reply. And, then, much to their disappointment, court was adjourned for a short recess.

AS Dixie sat with bowed head, she was conscious of quick footsteps coming down the aisle. The next moment a reassuring hand was laid on her shoulder and a tender voice whispered in her ear:

"Don't be afraid, dear. Everything will come out all right."

This is an adaptation of Columbia Pictures' screen presentation of the original story by Cosmo Hamilton. H. Green wrote the scenario and Christy Cabanné directed, with Marceline Day appearing as Dixie Calhoun, Ralph Forbes as Bruce Neil, Norman Trevor as John Neil, Robert Ellis as Robert Haines, Mary Mabery as Susan, Gordon Elliott as George Baxter and Coy Watson as the office boy.

She raised tear-brimmed eyes to the earnest ones above her and, in spite of the ugly evidence that had been given against her, read there nothing but trust and faith.

"Baxter lied," she whispered. "The door was locked between us."

"I have a personal interest in the case," Bruce told the defense attorney. "Won't you lel me help?"

But the clerk of the court was calling the room to order and the attorney for the defense addressed the bench.

"With the court's permission, Mr. Bruce Neil will join the counsel for the defense."

A surprised whisper swept the court-room. Here, indeed, was drama, for everyone knew that the young lawyer was the district attorney's only son.

"I should like to recall George Baxter to the stand," was the new counsel's first move. "You testified that you spent a night at the Shawnee Hotel with the defendant. Did you occupy the same room?"

Baxter's eyes shifted from his questioner to the surprised face of the district attorney, before whose mind flashed the directors' room of the school board, a wistful-eyed girl standing before the long table, her heart-broken plea, "But I was tricked into going—the man lied to me. You are convicting me only on circumstantial evidence, you narrow-minded bigots!"

But his star witness was answering reluctantly:

"No, sir, we had adjoining rooms."

"Was the door between the rooms locked?"

"Yes," came the response—still reluctantly.

"Why did she go with you to that hotel?"

"She thought she was going to—to a party."

"Do you realize that you were under oath to tell the whole truth?"

"I was only answering questions."

"You admit then that you know nothing against this girl's reputation?"

An audible sigh of relief swept the court-room as George Baxter confessed that he didn't.

AND now it was a different Dixie who took the stand, a girl who realized she had at least a fighting chance. The new lawyer's voice was almost tender—and the sob-sisters made a mental note to play up this fact in their afternoon copy—as he started questioning his client.

"You said it was for a proper purpose that you had Robert Haines in your apartment. What was that purpose?"

Dixie's eyes were wistful as they gazed into the gray ones waiting so eagerly for her answer to the question.

"I had been convinced that I ought to shock and disillusion the man I love."

"Who convinced you of that?"

"His father—he threatened to ruin his son if I refused."

"Who is father of the man you love?"

Shyly, Dixie nodded in the direction of the district attorney—and the sob-sisters fairly gargled with delight. Here, indeed, was the biggest story of the year.

But Bruce Neil was addressing the jury. It was his first big case and the first great love of his life lent eloquence to his plea.

"What shameful proceedure! The law in the sacred name of Justice hounding an innocent girl to her death, stripping her of that which she values more than life—her good name. A blind intolerance and bigotry have turned the prosecuter into a relentless persecutor."

The look that Bruce Neil flashed at his father burned with the spirit of the crusader. But the district attorney was a proud man and much of his pride lay in the fact that, when he determined to convict a prisoner, that conviction was usually granted. He rose to his feet, an older edition of the fiery young battler who had just taken his seat, and addressed the twelve men and women who were honestly endeavoring not to be swayed by the eloquence of the defendant's attorney, by the romance that they sensed beneath it all.

"In spite of the dramatics injected into this case, I ask that you find the defendant guilty. This is not an argument between attorneys but the trial of a woman against whom we have a clear case of premeditated murder. The evidence shows that she invited the deceased to her apartment, got him drunk—and murdered him!"

NO one in that crowded court-room stirred as the judge charged the jury, and the twelve men and woman filed silently out to decide whether this young girl should be sent to the electric chair or be returned to freedom and the arms of the man she loved.

And Dixie seemed the least concerned of all those involved; indeed, there was a new, happy light in her eyes. The jury might find her guilty,

(*Continued on page 31*)

Our School of Scenario Writing

Conducted by ANNE MAXWELL

LESSON SEVENTY-EIGHT (Reviewed)

Have You Noticed the Changing Styles?

HAVE you noticed how popular comedy is becoming for feature films? Producers are quick to note the type of picture that goes well with the public and, when one of any type goes exceptionally well, there is sure to be a flock of similar ones put out at once. They are shrewd enough to take advantage of any wave or cycle of popular favor and to hang onto it as long as it lasts. As the New York *World* puts it:

"If a picture makes a hit on account of certain well-marked characteristics, immediately rival producers are given a hint of the public taste and they are quick to take advantage of it."

You will all remember that it isn't so long ago that flapper pictures were all the go. Everything was flaming youth and perfect flappers and painted ones and so on. That vogue rather died out. Even the flappers got tired of seeing nothing but flappers. Next followed sex pictures, many of them involving trouble with the censors. With their vamps and their eternal triangles, it got so that, after the censors cut them and made them innocuous, the titles, thrilling and alluring, were found disappointing because they promised more than the censored film could show.

Some pretty good prophets in the film industry say that the public is now ready for the biggest flock of comedies ever shown in one season. They claim that the marked success of several recent pictures along clean comedy lines show this.

You will realize, of course, that the kind of comedy that is coming into such seemingly strong vogue, as the wiseacres report, is not at all of the old custard-pie throwing kind with which we have all been familiar for years. That kind of stuff is suitable only for two-reelers. After that it wearies us.

Pure farce is more the type, as are many of the stage successes of the present time. Again to quote the *World*:

"Audiences want to laugh—plenty of good, clean, rollicking, humorous situations and a lot of lively action with fun in every footage.

And now a little about how to write your comedy. To most writers, unless specially gifted, it does come easier to write of tragic happenings; in fact, comedy is rated, even among professional writers, as about the hardest type of drama to write. But, remember, it can be done and maybe you are just the one to do it. You never can tell till you try. Mr. Bernard Shaw is credited with saying when asked how to write comedy:

"Disregard all academic counsel on the subject and go learn your trade from the circus clown."

But I don't think that Mr. Shaw's advice is going to help us very much, even though he is considered an authority on so many things. Comedy, the slap-stick kind that is the comedy of the circus clown, isn't at all the type we want.

In your own experience, either at business or at play, there ought to be many incidents or series of incidents that you can utilize in writing your play. If they have not just the necessary comic twist in reality, perhaps, on thinking them over, your imagination can supply something that will make them screamingly funny; in fact, if you think of it, many things that do not appear funny at the time do so later on as we recollect them. At the moment, we are perhaps too near to get a good perspective, but time gives us this. And the same perspective is supplied to audiences by the fact that the experiences are not their own but are occurring to characters on the screen.

Haven't you ever started to tell of some experience which, as you related it, developed unexpected humor? And haven't you ruefully exclaimed, when your listeners have laughed:

"Yes, but it didn't seem so funny at the time"?

Well, that's the sort of situation that is going to help out in preparing your comedy.

In writing comedy, generally speaking, timeliness has a great deal to do with success. And here the newspapers are a great help. Some situation with absorbing interest and with a humorous angle may be claiming the attention of every one and be the subject of news articles, of editorials and of cartoons. This should be your meat. See if you cannot hang a plot onto it.

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ROMANCE OF THE UNDERWORLD

(Continued from page 8)

She took a courageous step nearer him and quick as a flash he seized her wrist and stripped it of the glittering bracelet which Steve had placed there only an hour before. Her diamond ring was taken with a second lighting gesture. She cried out in distress:

"Dan, don't take those—especially the bracelet! My husband gave it to me only this morning! Don't take those!"

He put the shining things in his pocket and grinned.

"You can *ransom* these pretties easy enough, girlie. It's up to you. You meet me at five this afternoon with five thousand grand and I'll give these things back to you. But if you don't come —I'll tell papa!"

She stood, stunned, with stricken eyes as he turned and left her. What could she do—what *could* she do?

To the man who came presently to ask her about arrangements for the anniversary dinner she returned a distracted answer. Suddenly she sprang to her feet.

"If Mr. Ransome comes home early, tell him I've gone shopping," she told the girl as she left the apartment. There was just one man who would understand and help, if help was possible.

Lieutenant Burke looked up from his desk to see her lovely, agonized face and outstretched, trembling hands.

"Steady!" he said. "Sit down, Mrs. Ransome. It's all right—all right. Just tell me all about it."

She poured out the whole story, breathlessly, and he listened with his kindly face growing very grave as she went on. At last he said:

"Then you didn't tell your husband anything —about those days?"

"I couldn't—he loves me so and trusts me—and thinks I'm everything a woman should be. How could I?"

The detective shook his head slowly.

"It's too bad you didn't tell him, all the same. I believe in telling the truth to your partner. It smooths things. Well, we'll see what we can do. Now you go home and let me do the rest of the worrying. Good luck—and *keep your chin up!*"

When she had gone, with the smile coming back into her eyes and her slender face lifted as he had commanded, he rang for an officer.

"Wasn't Champagne Joe paroled yesterday for good behavior?" he asked.

"Yes, sir."

"Uh-huh. I guess I'll go out for awhile."

He went to the Evening Star and pushed past the alarmed man at the door.

"Joe not in, eh? Well, I guess I'll go in and see him, anyway. Oh, hullo, Joe! Don't be scared—this isn't official! I just want to get a little dope on Derby Dan. I know he's a close pal of yours and I just wondered what the trouble was between you and him that night you were nabbed."

"There wasn't no trouble between us. Sure, he's my pal."

"Well, I just wondered why he told me that stolen stuff was on you. And I just wondered whether it was the way of a pal to take Blondy Nell as soon as you were in stir."

Champagne Joe flushed slowly.

"I wouldn't take the word of a cop!"

"You don't have to take anybody's word, Joe. They're living up in your old place. The whole world knows that. Well, I'm glad there wasn't any bad feelings between you, Joe. Dan's a nice fellow, isn't he? All the same, anyone who wasn't such a good scout as you might get sore at him. Of course, *you* wouldn't do anything to him. If anything *did* happen to him, I'd know it wasn't you who did it, that's all. I guess I'll stroll along. I've got something to tend to uptown. Glad to see you out and around, Joe."

He wandered into the office of the city coroner half an hour later and sat down comfortably in the spare armchair.

"How's business today, Jim!"

"Pretty slow," said the other, slightly surprised.

"Well, I guess I'll stay around awhile. I've got a sort of hunch business will pick up pretty soon." He relaxed easily in the chair.

UP in Champagne Joe's old apartment, the blonde girl clung around Dan's neck as he showed her a diamond-studded bracelet and a flashing ring.

"Pretty, ain't they, baby? No—hands off—they're not for you, but they're goin' to be worth a lot of jack this afternoon. I'll tell you all about it. Now, you sit comfy on papa's knee and—"

A key grated in the lock and the door swung open. Champagne Joe's eyes went from the girl's flushed face to Dan's—suddenly pallid.

"Thought I'd give a little surprise to my—two pals!" he said.

They covered their embarrassment with pretended welcome. They told him how glad they

were to see him—how happy—how great it was. Champagne Joe listened—and smiled.

Presently he suggested that Dan go down to the Evening Star with him and have a drink to celebrate. He was very insistent. Dan rose reluctantly and Nell said she was going to follow as soon as she was dressed. Outside the apartment Joe turned and deliberately locked the door.

"Just to keep her safe for a minute," he said, with forced geniality. Then dapper Derby Dan *knew*. He started to run but he was too late. Inside that locked room Nell heard a muffled thud and then the sound of footsteps moving softly away. She screamed.

THE door of the coroner's office opened briskly and an officer entered.

"Who do you think has just been bumped off, Chief? Derby Dan! There's a job for you in a hurry. The fellow that did it got away, but some seem to think it was his old pal, Champagne Joe."

Burke lounged lazily to his feet.

"Guess I'll come along with you, Doc," he said, and then, "No, I don't think it was Joe that did it. I saw Joe just a while ago at his club. He's a good scout—wouldn't hurt a fly. Well, let's go."

IT was six o'clock in the evening and the Ransomes were awaiting their dinner guests. Judith, paler than usual, kept her brave smile and answered her husband's loving words with apparent happiness though her heart was twisted with fear. The doorbell rang.

"I'll answer it!" she called.

Her hand trembled on the handle. Was it Burke to tell her that nothing could be done? Or was it —was it Dan? Her chin went up desperately and she opened the door.

The tall, lazy-moving figure outside took her slim hand and thrust something into it.

"There you are, Mrs. Ransome—they're all safe. And you needn't worry any about Dan in the future. He's not doing any more broadcasting —ever. See?" The relaxation after those hours of terrible strain almost made her believe she was going to faint, but the strong, friendly hand of Lieutenant Burke held her up. "Everything's all right from now on. Now *keep your chin up!*" He was gone.

Downstairs, a battered Ford was waiting for him, driven by a happy-faced woman who smiled into his eyes as he climbed in.

"Another good day's work done, Mother." he said. "Now let's go to the movies!"

FANNIE BRICE

(*Continued from page 12*)

long and thin, too, and the cheese-cloth dress was so very short!

They played one-night stands in Pennsylvania, real troupers, with their battered trunks, their pathetic finery, brave hearts and tired feet. Even the dog who had his part in the show was a thin dog, though his tail was carried like a flag of courage. Fannie and the dog were pals from the first, and it became part of her job to take care of him, feed him, comb him and make sure that no wandering fleas had found a home in his thick fur. It was the feeding of him that hurt—not that Fannie wasn't glad to feed him, but it took ten cents a day and Mrs. Lewis allowed the girl only twenty-five cents a day for food. So, when the canine actor was fed, Fannie ate fifteen cents worth of whatever she could find was most solid and filling for the price. Of course, taking the attitude that her pupil was getting a lot of priceless experience, Mrs. Lewis did not pay her any salary. Truly, it was a rocky road in those days!

(*To be continued in the next issue*)

RESTLESS YOUTH

(*Continued from page 28*)

the world might condemn her, but still she knew that in the heart of Bruce Neil there was nothing but faith and trust—and to her this counted more than life itself.

THE jury was out a surprisingly short time. Did this mean acquittal or conviction? Bruce Neil's face was death-like, tiny white lines appeared about his firm young mouth as his gaze tried to force the answer from the expressionless faces of the twelve who held his life's happiness in their grasp. His, not Dixie's, were the pleading eyes that the foreman gazed into as he pronounced the verdict:

"*Not Guilty!*"

THE sob-sisters crowded around the young couple who, clasped in each other's arms, were oblivious to the rest of the world. Then a white-haired man joined them, a man who no longer held his head high with pride in his office as prosecuting attorney but rather bent it in humiliation at the thought of the innocent lives he might have been instrumental in taking in the name of circumstantial evidence.

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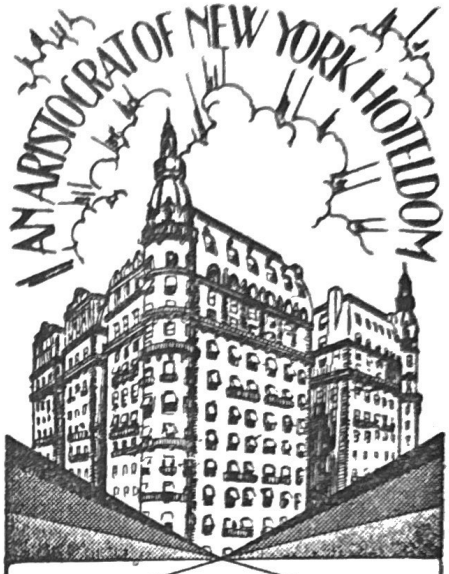

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